

YOUNG PEOPLE BECOME HOMELESS

People do not seem to be aware of this problem

This may be because not many people have experienced themselves or anyone that is around them becoming homeless, so because it does not affect them, directly or indirectly; it is seen to not be a major issue that needs to be fixed, which is actually quite the opposite. The problem needs to be fixed sooner rather than later.

Another reason people may not be aware of the growing problem that is youth homelessness, is that they may already have a stereotypical view towards what the average homeless person is meant to look like (as in they have not experienced any other group of individuals such as young people being homeless).

Or just maybe people refuse to believe that young people are being made to fend for themselves in some situations to find their own accommodation in a world that is not built for young, single people to have a place for themselves. Due to housing options available, it is very hard for young people to find a place that is a one bedroom.

End youth homelessness Cymru (EYHC) has involved many young people's views into the research. Based on what the young people have told the practitioners, we have become very aware from young people's point of view and the views of other practitioners from around the world, of what we need to for youth homelessness to come to an end.

Together we have created the roadmap to ensure that we help prevent homelessness for anyone, regardless of who they are or what their background may be.

The reason that I am writing this blog is that I want other young people to know that we are making steps towards ending youth homelessness in Wales.

Academics, including one from Wales have explained how we can end homelessness and have put together five categories of ways we can end homelessness. The categories are Universal Prevention, Targeted Prevention, Crisis Prevention, Emergency Prevention and Recovery Prevention.

I am going to explain what each of the categories are and give an example of how it could prevent homelessness.



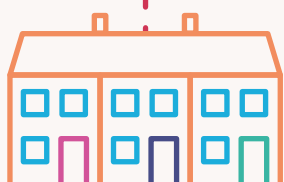
UNIVERSAL PREVENTION



This is when we prevent or at least minimise the risk of young people in the general population of experiencing homelessness.

Example

Just one of the areas in universal prevention is making sure there is enough affordable housing for young people. One innovative and exciting approach is the youth housing association Tai Ffres a partnership with United Welsh and Llamau. Tai Ffres was only launched this year but it will offer young people a chance to live in social housing that has been designed for young people.

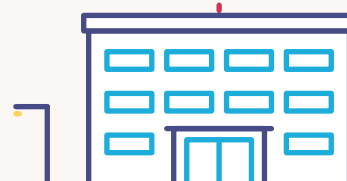


TARGETED PREVENTION

We know that some young people come from certain positions in life that make them more susceptible to experience homelessness. If we could target those young people with support, we could then prevent them from becoming homeless. The young people who are more at risk of homelessness are young people leaving care, prison or hospital after mental health treatment.

Example

One service that has been designed to support care experienced young people from care into independent living is TGP Cymru's Team Around the Tenancy. The youth-focused services works with young people using a restorative approach working with them, rather than doing to or for them, to ensure a sustainable outcome. They provide tailored advice for the individual and focus on coordinating the systems that young care experienced people are involved with. Small caseloads allow practitioners the time needed to help young people navigate these systems effectively.

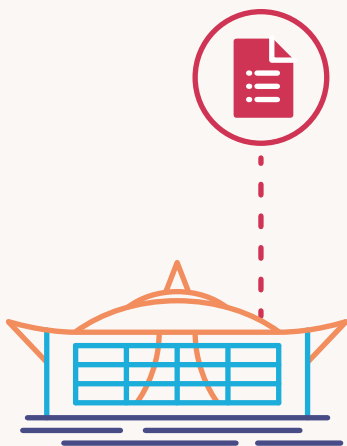


CRISIS PREVENTION

Crisis prevention focus on the prevention of youth homelessness when it is likely to happen within 56 days, in line with the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, which instructs Local Authorities to take action when someone tells them they are threatened with homelessness.

Example

In our 'Don't let me Fall Through the Cracks' report young people were made homeless by a local authority due to the fact that they didn't have a local connection. One young woman was aged 18 when she became homeless, and the local authority told her that because she didn't have a local connection and she couldn't be housed where she would have like and this then resulted in her sleeping on floor space in a mixed age hostel. The local connection rules are about money, not the person. Young people should have the right to have their homelessness prevented in any local authority in Wales whether they have a local connection or not.



EMERGENCY PREVENTION

Emergency prevention is when we provide immediate support for young people at immediate risk of homelessness, especially those sleeping rough.

Example

One approach that can keep young people out of unsuitable emergency accommodation is Community Hosting, where members of the community with spare rooms in their homes can offer these to young people in need of accommodation. This approach can take the form of short, emergency stays (providing time for support workers to arrange for a young person to stay more permanently with another family member), often under the Nightstop.



RECOVERY PREVENTION

When someone has been homeless once they are more likely to experience it again recovery prevention is about preventing a young person from experiencing youth homelessness.

Example

Funded by the Welsh Government Innovation Fund, Ty Pride, Wales' first LGBTQ+-specific youth supported housing project, is the first of its kind, developed in response to recommendations in Out on the Streets, after young LGBTQ+ people expressed a desire for environments in which they could share housing with other young LGBTQ+ people.

